



When You Are a Vegetarian: What You Need to Know

Keep Healthy Without Eating Meat

If you do not eat meat or animal-based foods, you need to eat a wide variety of plant foods to get the nutrients you need for pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Every day, eat at least six to seven plant protein servings like beans, tofu, nuts, seeds, and peanut butter, and at least six to eight whole grains like rice, pasta, wheat, and other grains.

It also helps to eat dairy and eggs. That will give you more protein choices and important vitamins and minerals like calcium, vitamin D, and B12.

Check the plant protein food ideas below that you could try:

Eat legumes (beans and peas) and grains to boost protein:

- ☐ Rice and beans
- ☐ Cornbread and black-eyed peas
- ☐ Corn tortillas and beans
- ☐ Lentil soup and whole wheat crackers
- ☐ Tofu and brown rice
- ☐ Lentils and pasta
- ☐ Baked beans and whole wheat bread
- ☐ Humus and pita bread
- ☐ Whole wheat breads, flours, pastas, brown rice and whole oats
- ☐ Follow *MyPlate for Moms* and select servings of plant proteins and/or eggs and dairy



Eat nuts and seeds every day:

- ☐ Tofu with peanuts and broccoli
- ☐ Trail mix with peanuts and sunflower seeds
- ☐ Split pea soup and whole wheat walnut bread
- ☐ Peanut butter on English muffins
- ☐ Sesame seeds sprinkled on rice, vegetables, and salads
- ☐ Pasta salad with walnuts and sunflower seeds
- ☐ Sunflower seeds and almonds in fruit salads and on top of cereals

Add plant protein to vegetable dishes:

- ☐ Gumbo with okra, corn, and lima beans
- ☐ Collards and pinto beans
- ☐ Tofu and stir-fried vegetables
- ☐ Green leafy salad with garbanzo beans
- ☐ Vegetable soup with barley and red beans

Select these plant protein foods from WIC:

- ☐ Tofu and tempeh
- ☐ Calcium and vitamin D fortified soy milk
- ☐ Beans (dry or canned), lentils and peas
- ☐ Peanut butter

Take your prenatal vitamin and mineral pill every day:

- ☐ Talk to your health care provider about whether or not you need extra vitamin B12. A good source of B12 is Red Star Vegetarian Support Formula nutritional yeast.
- ☐ You may also need extra iron, calcium, zinc, or vitamin D